



# RPCV update

## Recognizing Exceptional Post-Peace Corps Service

One term of Peace Corps service didn't do it for Daniel Tamulonis. After teaching English in Zaire from 1975 to 1977 (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), he served there again, from 1977 to 1979. That didn't do it, either. Starting in 1979, he served again, this time as associate director of the Peace Corps for education. And following Peace Corps employment, in 1993 he took up leadership of the groundbreaking Peace Corps Fellows/USA program at Columbia University, serving for 10 years.

Last August, Tamulonis became the first individual recipient of the Peace Corps' recognition program for outstanding service as a returned Volunteer. At a ceremony at the annual conference

of the National Peace Corps Association in Chicago, Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez presented Tamulonis with the award for outstanding accomplishment in promoting the third goal of the agency—educating Americans about countries where the Peace Corps serves. When Tamulonis became coordinator of the Peace Corps Fellows/USA program at Columbia, the program was in its infancy. During his tenure at Columbia, Tamulonis built an exemplary teacher education and internship program for Peace Corps Fellows. (Fellows are returned Volunteers who receive financial benefits for studies toward advanced degrees while gaining related experience in service to high-need U.S. communities.) He was instrumental in attracting more than \$1 million for the program at Columbia from Roslyn and Elliot Jaffe, founders of Dress Barn.

The recipient of the Peace Corps' first group award for RPCV service went to the RPCVs of Wisconsin–Madison. This exceptionally active group publishes a

monthly newsletter, hosts information tables at local farmers' markets, participates in a run for a food charity, and holds regular social events. Perhaps most prominently, the Madison group has published an international calendar since 1987 to convey Peace Corps experiences to home communities and to raise money for grass-roots projects where RPCVs served. The RPCVs of Wisconsin–Madison donate the calendars to schools and other educational institutions—including World Wise Schools, which receives thousands of calendars each year for its U.S. teachers who are corresponding with Peace Corps Volunteers. The RPCVs of Wisconsin also sell the calendars directly to the public. In 2003, the group provided \$98,000 to the Peace Corps Partnership Program, which funds small-scale, sustainable development projects in countries where the Peace Corps serves.

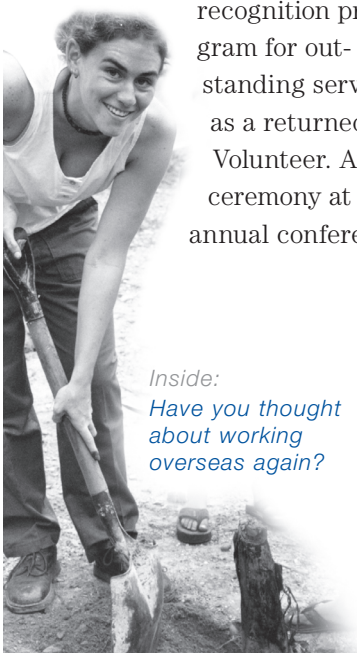
In October, the Peace Corps granted its second special recognition for individual RPCVs to Blair



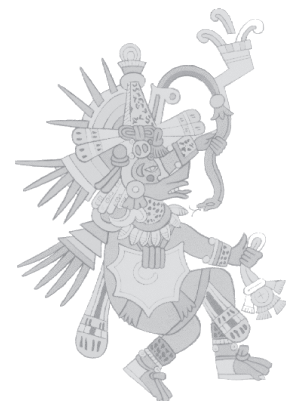
*Honor recipient Daniel Tamulonis (in glasses) in his Peace Corps days in Zaire, with friends who were language teachers for Peace Corps trainees*

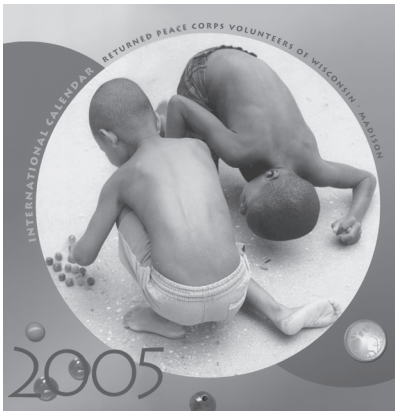
Orr, associate professor in the School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science at Michigan Technical University. A Volunteer in Lesotho from 1978 to 1981, Orr started the Master's International program at the School of Forest Resources, in which students combine graduate study toward a master's degree with service as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Since its inception in 1995, the program in Michigan has graduated 21 Master's students who also completed ▶

*Inside:  
Have you thought  
about working  
overseas again?*



*Inside:  
Peace Corps  
Receives  
Guatemalan  
Honor*





*Calendar from RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison*

*continued from front page*

Peace Corps service, and 17 more are in the process of studying at the university or serving as Volunteers today. Orr helped two other Master's International

programs start up at the university, and he also initiated the Fellows/USA program there. "We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and supportive individual involved in preparing future Peace Corps Volunteers and professionals to contribute not only to environmental issues, but to humanitarian issues as well," said Master's International program director Sylvia Alejandre.

Also in October, the Peace Corps granted its second special recognition for group activity to the Chicago Area Peace Corps Association (CAPCA). As an RPCV group, they have carried out activities related to Peace Corps Week, supported Volunteer projects overseas through the Peace Corps Partnership Program, made use of Coverdell World Wise Schools resources, and helped place RPCVs as speakers at local schools and other organizations. The association also put an enormous amount of effort into successfully hosting the 2004 National Peace Corps Association conference. In addition, CAPCA actively supports the Chicago recruiting office. "Members volunteered their time to be guest speakers at Chicago-area general information meetings and gave presentations in area schools during Peace Corps Week and throughout the year," said Jeri Titus, PC recruiter in Chicago.

## Wrong Address?

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**[www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv/records](http://www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv/records)**  
to provide us with corrections.



# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

## HIV/AIDS Prevention and Education Program

The Peace Corps is expanding its initiative to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic—in matters regarding health, social repercussions, and economic effects of the scourge. The expanding number of programs includes activities worldwide, with a primary focus in Africa, where more than 2,700

Volunteers are currently serving in 26 countries. As part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Response, the Peace Corps will further develop projects in prevention, education, and community-based organization—work that Volunteers have been doing for the past several years.

Peace Corps Volunteers in HIV/AIDS education and prevention train youth as peer educators, collaborate with community and religious leaders to develop appropriate education strategies, provide support to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, and develop programs that provide support to families and communities affected by the disease. All Peace Corps posts in Africa, Central and South America, and the Pacific—and most in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia—carry out HIV/AIDS activities. In total, Volunteers reach more than 800,000 beneficiaries



*An awareness sign for an HIV/AIDS campaign takes shape at the hands of a PCV and the director of a Tonga-based nongovernmental organization*

through their HIV/AIDS efforts, and this figure will dramatically increase. Two posts, Botswana and Swaziland, are devoted exclusively to HIV/AIDS activities.

Volunteers from all sectors have been successful focusing HIV/AIDS messages

about prevention and education on youth, drawing primarily from the Peace Corps-produced *Life Skills Manual*. UNESCO has identified the manual as a best-practice document in HIV/AIDS education, and the book has been adopted into the national curriculum of some countries. In addition, through the use of information technology and other strategies, the Peace Corps is enhancing the capability of Volunteers and their communities to obtain and exchange information about the best practices and latest innovations in public education, behavior change, and delivery of services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Furthermore, the Crisis Corps is committing additional Volunteers to fighting HIV/AIDS, recruiting primarily for countries in southern and eastern Africa, Haiti, and Guyana.

# Volunteered Already? Consider the Crisis Corps!

Have you thought about working overseas again? The Crisis Corps draws on returned Peace Corps Volunteers for fascinating, challenging short-term assignments around the world. Qualified RPCVs can put their skills and knowledge to good use and gain additional experience in international development by serving as Crisis Corps Volunteers (CCVs).

Some Volunteers, such as Alice Henry (Cote d'Ivoire, 1997–2001; CCV Guinea, 2003), begin overseas service after retirement and bring a wealth of experience to their Crisis Corps assignments. After a career as a demographer, working for many years in research, monitoring, and evaluation, Henry used her skills in her six-month Crisis Corps assignment as a food aid monitor in Guinea.

*'My counterparts were really motivated, organized, and energetic.'*

"I was nicely placed with the World Food Programme to use my professional experience redoing their monitoring, and surveying materials and evaluating their school feeding program. My counterparts were really motivated, organized, and energetic.... [The CCVs in Guinea] performed a valuable service and were really appreciated by our counterparts."

Many CCVs bring years of professional experience to their assignments. Some take leave from their jobs mid-career through established programs or special leaves of absence; others enter or return to overseas service after retirement. For RPCVs who have "been there and done that," the Crisis Corps offers the opportunity to put hard-earned skills to good use amid new and varied challenges.

The Crisis Corps works in five broad program areas—humanitarian response, natural disaster relief and reconstruction, HIV/AIDS, disaster preparedness and mitigation, and post-conflict relief and reconstruction—and is constantly exploring new program ideas to meet changing needs worldwide.

## For more information about the Crisis Corps

**visit** [www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv/crisiscorps](http://www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv/crisiscorps)  
**call** 800.424.8580, ext 2250  
**e-mail** [crisiscorps@peacecorps.gov](mailto:crisiscorps@peacecorps.gov)  
**write** Peace Corps/Crisis Corps  
Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters  
1111 20th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20526



*Crisis Corps Volunteer Jill "Ana" Awkerman plants rootstock for plantains with Venezuelan children in a community garden.*

## Where to Go for a Great Read



A virtual clearinghouse for anyone interested in Peace Corps literature—memoirs, essays, poems, stories, novels—is no more than a click away: It's the website [peacecorpswriters.org](http://peacecorpswriters.org). For 15 years, readers—and returned Volunteers in particular—have been well served first by a newsletter, then by this website. The site features book reviews of new Peace Corps-written works, an archive of writers and their works, tips for finding agents, writing workshops, and a general forum for those interested in materials written by Peace Corps authors. If you're an avid reader, you'll discover a wealth of good reading at the site.

*Peace Corps Writers*

# Guatemala Bestows Highest Honor On the Peace Corps



Director Gaddi H. Vasquez (left) represents the Peace Corps as Guatemalan President Oscar Berger bestows a medal on the U.S. agency.

A thousand thanks—or, actually, 4,500 thanks—to all present and former Peace Corps Volunteers and staff in Guatemala over the past 41 years. That's what Guatemalan President Oscar Berger Perdomo offered in a formal ceremony last spring at the National Palace in Guatemala City, when he awarded the nation's highest honor—the *Orden del Quetzal*—to the Peace Corps. He presented the award for distinguished service in strengthening harmony and good will between Guatemala and the United States. Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez received the award for Peace Corps Volunteers and staff, with U.S. Ambassador John R. Hamilton, Guatemalan dignitaries, 150 PCVs, staff, and RPCVs present.

In an editorial published in the local press on the day of the ceremony, Ambassador Hamilton remarked, "Today is a red-letter day in the history of U.S.–Guatemalan relations. No treaty is being signed, no money is being donated, and no new building is being unveiled. Instead, ... President Berger will confer the Order of the Quetzal\* ... on the Peace Corps."

"We are honored to be recognized for the contributions that Peace Corps has made to the citizens of this country," said Director Vasquez, "contributions that show that one person ... can truly change the lives of generations of people—and how generations of Guatemala citizens have influenced the life of each and every Volunteer who has served here."

The Peace Corps has served continuously in Guatemala since December 1962. Today, more than 240 Volunteers are working in the areas of agriculture, the environment, health, small business development, and rural youth opportunities.

Country Director Cindy Threlkeld encourages all former Volunteers who served in Guatemala to become active in Friends of Guatemala, renewing their involvement with the country.

## To join, or for information:

**write** Friends of Guatemala (FOG)  
P.O. Box 33018  
Washington, DC 20033

**e-mail** Friends\_of\_Guatemala@hotmail.com



\* The quetzal (pronounced keh-TZ AHL), an ornate, largely red-and-green bird of the Central American rain forest, is the national bird of Guatemala. The national currency is called the quetzal.

## Fellows/USA Offers Opportunities for Midlife Career Changers

Martha Hesla was not a stereotypical Peace Corps Fellow. At 55, as a returned Peace Corps Volunteer, she decided to take advantage of her lifetime eligibility for Fellows/USA, a fellowship program that offers reduced-cost graduate study to returned Volunteers. Hesla, of Tucson, enrolled in the Fellows program at Western Illinois University 10 years after starting Peace Corps service in Costa Rica, in 1991.

Volunteering at midlife, Hesla defied the popular perception that Peace Corps Volunteers are always twentysomething recent college graduates. She had already raised a family and established a career in health and human services before serving in Central America, where she helped develop small businesses until 1993.

"I've met so many people who want to serve and share their experience and expertise but feel they're too old," said Hesla. "[Joining the Peace Corps] is a great way to renew yourself." She says she seldom noticed the age gap between herself and her peers. "I had been middle-aged going into the Peace Corps and I formed friendships that continue with the younger Volunteers. The age difference doesn't seem as important as our common interests. It's terrific to have friends in all different age groups."

Peace Corps Fellows gain on-the-job experience serving internships in high-need communities. Hesla's internship was with the Overall Economic Development and Planning Commission of Cass County, Illinois. The commission works to bring small cities together to develop and create economic opportunity on a countywide level. As its first staff person, Hesla focused on developing local tourism.

Fellows/USA has programs in numerous disciplines at more than 30 universities. The Fellows/USA website at [www.peacecorps.gov/fellows](http://www.peacecorps.gov/fellows) provides a list of current programs.



Jeanne McCarter, a Peace Corps Fellow at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, takes the blood pressure of a girl at Wald Community Nursing Center.

# Thoughts on Peace Corps Week 2005

## *Reaping Riches From the Girl Scouts and the Peace Corps*

By Sapreet K. Saluja  
(RPCV Uganda, 1998–1999; Kenya, 1999–2001)

My mom likes to recall that she took me “kicking and screaming” to my first Girl Scout meeting. I was in the seventh grade, when most girls are leaving Girl Scouting. Little did I realize then how much I would one day appreciate my parents’ foresight in introducing me to such an organization. Sure, I sold some cookies and learned some camp songs. But I also was challenged to explore the world, improve myself, and contribute to the well-being of my community.

Volunteerism was a huge part of my Girl Scout experience, as was finding a connection to the world outside of the United States. In my senior year of high school, I was selected as one of four girls from across the country to represent the Girl Scouts at an international event in New Zealand. Until then, I had not had use for a passport. Those four weeks connected me to the world outside of the United States in a way no family vacation ever could have.

My senior year of college brought me to a turning point. I submitted my application to the Peace Corps, was accepted, and served in both Uganda and Kenya.

As it is for most Volunteers, serving in the Peace Corps was life-altering. For more than two and a half years, I taught people how to help themselves. In exchange, they lifted the blinders I was unknowingly wearing and allowed me to see the world and life more clearly than ever before.

On the day I left Africa, a dozen Kenyan Maasai elders took me to the airport to see me off. I had spent countless days sitting under acacia trees debating with these men, struggling to bring everyone to a common ground, trying to understand life experiences so different from my own, fighting to manage egos, searching for solutions to problems the community was struggling with. The clan elders and I knew one another well. In the moments before I stepped onto the plane, they told me that they never imagined that a little girl from America would have such an impact on their lives. I struggled to find the words to



*Peace Corps Director Vasquez honors Junior Girl Scouts of Rockville, Md., for their educational donation to a Peace Corps project in Micronesia.*

express how much they had changed my life. Upon my departure, I embraced each elder for the first time, allowing emotions to overrule cultural appropriateness just once.

My experiences with the Girl Scouts and my time as a Peace Corps Volunteer are closely tied. The Girl Scouts provided fertile ground for the seed planted by a middle-school English teacher who had been a Peace Corps Volunteer in the 1960s. The Girl Scouts encouraged me to think globally and act locally; the Peace Corps challenged me to broaden my understanding of what “local” really means.

There is room for tremendous collaboration between these organizations. There are the more obvious opportunities to connect Girl Scout troops with current Volunteers through the World Wise Schools match program and to invite recently returned Peace Corps Volunteers to speak to troops. But there are also opportunities for RPCVs to get involved in the community-service efforts of the Girl Scouts, both locally and nationally. The Girl Scouts are always looking for mentors, and RPCVs have a unique world perspective to share.

Peace Corps Week provides the perfect opportunity to jump-start your relationship with the Girl Scouts. Get in touch with them at [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org). I can assure you, it’s not all cookies and camping! This is a great opportunity to share your Peace Corps experience and inspire the next generation of women activists and leaders.

Promote  
world  
peace and  
friendship  
during Peace  
Corps Week

February 28–  
March 6, 2005

Join thousands of RPCVs in celebrating the agency’s 44th anniversary by making classroom or community presentations. If you register online or by mail, you will receive a presentation kit, including souvenirs for audiences. Visit the Peace Corps website for ideas, suggestions, and resources for your presentation. Register online at [www.peacecorps.gov/pcweek](http://www.peacecorps.gov/pcweek).

Did you know that by sharing your Peace Corps experiences, you can help Junior Girl Scouts, ages 8–11, earn their badges for Global Awareness, World Neighbors, and Humans and Habitats? And you can help Girl Scouts ages 11–17 earn the new “Discover the World” patch. For more information, see [http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gc\\_central/insignia](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gc_central/insignia).



Questions?

e-mail  
[pcweek@peacecorps.gov](mailto:pcweek@peacecorps.gov)

or call  
800.424.8580  
(press 2, then ext. 1961)

# Need Career Assistance?

Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) offers free career resources to RPCVs, including:

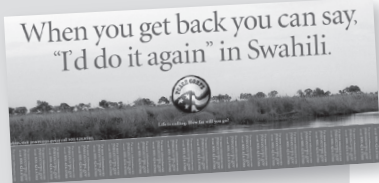
- Ⓒ *Hotline*, a semi-monthly newsletter of job announcements and educational programs
- Ⓒ Employment bulletins covering international and domestic jobs in development, public health, and the environment
- Ⓒ *Career Information Consultants*, a directory of more than 1,500 professionals in many fields who will answer career-related questions
- Ⓒ Career fairs
- Ⓒ Career assessment software: "Discover"
- Ⓒ Career and education publications, including *Career Resource Manual*
- Ⓒ Career centers in the Arlington, Virginia, regional recruiting office and other regional offices

For more information, contact RVS at [rvs@peacecorps.gov](mailto:rvs@peacecorps.gov)

## Share the Message

The recruitment materials for the Peace Corps campaign, *Life is calling. How far will you go?* are garnering a strong and positive response. More people are visiting the website than ever before, major television networks are carrying the public service announcement, and applications are reaching a historic high.

As an RPCV, you can easily bolster this trend and help the Peace Corps find future Volunteers in your region. We invite you to hang Peace Corps tear-card posters, like the one pictured, in local libraries, community centers, and colleges. The posters are of heavy paper stock and have the Peace Corps' 800 number on tear-off strips along the bottom. For copies, e-mail the marketing department at [psa@peacecorps.gov](mailto:psa@peacecorps.gov) with your name, address, and the quantity of posters you intend to distribute. We will be happy to send you posters while supplies last.



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